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SUBJECT: LODI GYARI INFORMS INDIA OF PLANS FOR TIBETAN RESETTLEMENT IN THE US

Classified By: Ambassador David C. Mulford, Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

¶1. (C) On January 3, the Dalai Lama's Special Representative Lodi Gyari told Ambassador Mulford that he had briefed MEA Joint Secretary (East Asia) Ashok Kantha that same day on Dharamsala's intention to relocate 10,000 Tibetan refugees from India and Nepal to the US. He emphasized that he had spoken to the GOI "informally," with the understanding that the US wanted to raise this issue with New Delhi separately. He mentioned only Dharamsala's wish to explore the possibility of resettlement to the US, but said he did not discuss US thoughts on the matter. Gyari indicated that a significant factor in the Tibetan Government-in-Exile's (TGIE's) decision to pursue resettlement was Nepal's recent push back of several Tibetan refugees and the poor economic opportunities for Tibetan refugees in India.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador noted his impression that Dharamsala had agreed not to raise the issue with the Indian government until the US had broached the matter. Gyari said that his intention had been "quite the opposite," remarking that "our relationship with India is unique, we are like family." To keep Dharamsala's plans from India would therefore be inappropriate, he emphasized, explaining, "we do not want India to misunderstand what we are trying to do." Gyari told the Ambassador that he had not yet raised the issue with Kathmandu, calling the Nepalese government "a different matter."

¶3. (C) Asked how the MEA had received this information, Gyari stated that Kantha had "taken the information very well," acknowledging that several Tibetan settlements in India were facing economic challenges.

MULFORD